

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

Meeting Date: April 2012
Title: Management Report, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office
Prepared by: Megan Duffy, Executive Coordinator

Approved by the Director: 

Summary

This memo provides highlights of work being done by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Steelhead Recovery Plan Funding

In May 2011, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) awarded \$250,000 to Puget Sound lead entities to develop and review elements of a Puget Sound steelhead recovery plan. In December 2011, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) reported that it was working closely with the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) to determine how they would distribute the funds.

The Puget Sound Recovery Council created a Steelhead Steering Committee, a small group of experts who identified the most critical needs for steelhead. They considered the work of the Puget Sound Steelhead Technical Review Team, which produced a draft Population Identification document and began drafting viability criteria in 2011, as well as recent marine studies and the WDFW Steelhead Action Plan. This review informed the steering committee's proposal on the best way to invest the \$250,000.

In March, the steering committee presented a proposal to the Recovery Council. This proposal differed from the board's original award to lead entities by (1) changing the scope of the work that would be done and (2) assuming that the work would not necessarily be done by lead entities. Rather, the proposal assumes that funds would be awarded to the PSP for distribution

through competitive contracting processes. The Recovery Council approved the proposal with the following three components:

1. Recommends \$175,000 for developing a recovery plan or framework for up to five populations of steelhead in Puget Sound.
2. Invests \$50,000 in the Marine Survival Project, which will provide information regarding why juvenile salmonids, including steelhead, are not surviving their journeys through Puget Sound.
3. Provides \$25,000 for finer application of the Intrinsic Potential model, which will help identify steelhead habitat at a finer resolution than is currently possible.

The GSRO supports the Recovery Council proposal. However, because some or all of the funds may not be distributed to Puget Sound lead entities, as originally approved, GSRO is asking the board to adopt amended language for the \$250,000 allocation to support the Puget Sound Recovery Council proposal.

Proposed Motion Language

Move to amend the allocation made in May 2011 so that \$250,000 is awarded to the Puget Sound Partnership to implement the Puget Sound steelhead recovery planning proposal approved by the Puget Sound Recovery Council in March 2012.

COR Letter to State Agencies

Salmon recovery plans identify and prioritize actions that should be taken by state and federal agencies. In December 2008, the GSRO prepared a report on the status of the state and federal actions that are considered to be high priorities for implementation¹. The report identified actions for seven state agencies: WDFW, DOE, RCO, DNR, DOT, Conservation Commission and Community, Trade and Economic Development (now the Department of Commerce).

The regional organizations are now implementing recovery plans, and have agreed that 2012 is an appropriate time to assess progress on priority state actions, recognize achievements, and identify key state agency priorities for the next biennium, particularly in light of state budget constraints.

To initiate this conversation with each of the seven state agencies, the Council of Regions and GSRO have prepared a letter for distribution to the state agency directors, requesting an individual discussion. These meetings will be scheduled for the late spring/early summer.

¹ (The full report can be found at http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/gsro/2008_recov_plan_report.pdf.)

2012 State of the Salmon in Watersheds Update

The GSRO has begun a collaborative process of building a web-based 2012 State of Salmon in Watersheds (SOSiW) report. Like past reports, the 2012 report will roll-up data consistently at both regional and state scales; contain indicators of adult and juvenile fish abundance, watershed health, and implementation; and highlight key information gaps and needs. The regional chapters may supplement the common indicators with contextual narrative and additional data to address local variability.

The 2012 report will be housed on RCO's website, with links to seven salmon recovery regional organization chapters. The web version of the report will have printable summary pages, a brief, printable executive summary, and links to a broader information base that will feed, inform and be aligned with the state report. Most of this electronic report will be static data, but will include a data delivery system that allows for dynamic data when it is available in the future.

GSRO worked with various partners to refine the stream flow and fish population indicators. We will soon begin coordinating the work to refine the remaining watershed health and implementation indicators (e.g., the recovery plan progress indicator for each region). We also have begun the scoping process for the data delivery system, web design, and graphics; a web template is due to GSRO by April 15, and agency data are due May 1.

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) Application for 2012

RCO is currently preparing the federal fiscal year 2012 Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) application. The 2012 PCSRF grant announcement was posted on March 9, 2012. Pre-applications are due on April 9 and the final applications are due April 23. The estimated total available will be \$65 million. Washington State intends to apply for the maximum allowable award of \$30 million. Additional information is in memo #4.